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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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This is UNEVALUATED Information

25X1

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. The government reorganization of June 1954 was the result of the Soviet principle of collective leadership rather than any change in the power relationships in Albania. Enver Hoxha, as leader of the Albanian Workers' (Communist) Party, is still the strongest man in Albania. Mehmet Shehu is not likely to succeed in wresting the number one position from him.

25X1

If an occasion ever arises for eliminating Shehu, Hoxha has two charges he can bring against him: first, his wartime brutality; second, in 1952 or 1953 while Hoxha was away on a trip to Moscow, Shehu publicly announced an intensification in the collectivization program which was promptly repudiated by Hoxha on his return.

25X1

2. The government reorganization did not cause a sensation in Albania.<sup>1</sup> Not long after the death of Stalin, an article appeared in the Russian newspaper, Pravda, entitled "Exaltation of the Individual" which was published in the Albanian press. The article pointed out that it was harmful for

25X1

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25X1

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INFORMATION REPORT      INFORMATION REPORT

S-E-C-R-E-T

- 2 -

Communist parties to exalt one individual and that both Marx and Lenin shunned adulation. Since May or June 1954, it has been forbidden in Albania to cheer for Hoxha, Shehu, Malenkov, or any Communist Party leader by name. Cheers that are permitted are "Long live the Albanian Workers' Party," "Long live the Soviet Union," and "Long live the Albanian people."

3. Hoxha and Shehu are the only really capable leaders of the regime, the others are mediocre "yes-men."
4. Members of the Politburo, in the order of their power are as follows: Hoxha, Shehu, Hysni Kapo, Gogo Nushi, Beqir Balluku, Liri Belishova and Spiro Koleka. Koleka's removal as Minister of Industry and appointment as President of the State Planning Commission was a big demotion. The demotion was due more to Shehu's dislike of Koleka than to incompetence.<sup>2</sup> Before too long Tuk Jakova is expected to replace Koleka on the Politburo.
5. The government's new economic policy to increase production of consumer goods, introduced in the summer of 1953, has been disappointing. During 1954, however, for the first time an Albanian could buy practically all the food items to which he was entitled by his ration card.
6. No fanfare accompanied the renewal of diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, and the arrival of the Yugoslav ambassador in Tirana was barely mentioned in the press. The Yugoslav ambassador's automobile in Tirana is not followed; earlier, all non-satellite diplomats were escorted both front and rear by security vehicles and motorcycles.

Comments:

1. [redacted] the change caused no sensation but did arouse some speculation that Hoxha was losing his number one position to Shehu. [redacted] Communist Party members were briefed before the change took place. 25X1
2. [redacted] Shehu's dislike of Koleka dates back to November 1941 when various Communist groups in Albania met to unite and organize action against the Italians. Koleka was the leader of a group called Grupa Zjarit "Fire Group" which dissented from the decision of the other groups to fight the Italians. Koleka's group professed to see no reason to fight the Italians, reasoning that the Italians would advance industry and the proletariat would thereby be increased. By the summer of 1942, the "Fire Group" had dispersed and practically all of them, including Koleka, had joined the other groups in fighting the Italians. [redacted] Shehu has never forgiven Koleka for his refusal to fight in 1941. 25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1